

VZCZCXYZ0011
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHLGB #1077 3251143
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 211143Z NOV 07
FM AMEMBASSY KIGALI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4928
INFO RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS 0169
RUEHJB/AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA 0194
RUEHDR/AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM 1010
RUEHKM/AMEMBASSY KAMPALA 1770
RUEHKI/AMEMBASSY KINSHASA 0332
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0141
RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI 1078
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0373

C O N F I D E N T I A L KIGALI 001077

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/01/2017
TAGS: [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [PINR](#) [PINS](#) [RW](#)
SUBJECT: GOMA DEMOBILIZATION OFFICER: NO EVIDENCE OF
RWANDANS IN CONGO

Classified By: Ambassador Michael R. Arietti, reason 1.4 (B/D)

¶1. (C) Embassy officers met November 10 in Kigali with Harald Hinkel, who works for the World Bank's Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Program (MDRP) office in Goma. Hinkel, who had working in Goma since January 2005, spends his work weeks in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and many weekends in Kigali, where his family lives. Hinkel described in detail his years-long inability to document alleged Rwandan military (RDF) intervention in eastern Goma, despite continual requests to Congolese Armed Forces (FARDC) commanders to do so, and many trips throughout North and South Kivu trying to do so himself.

¶2. (C) Hinkel said that he had investigated "many, many" accounts of Rwandan military intervention in the course of his work, but had never seen any proof -- merely "stories, rumors," and never any documentation. On only one occasion, he said, in his extensive travels across North and South Kivu, a Mai-Mai commander named Jackson claimed to have concrete proof -- the identity cards of two Rwandan soldiers the commander claimed to have killed in battle. When Hinkel came to see the commander and look at the cards, the Mai-Mai commander proudly showed him two Rwandan civilian identity cards. Informing the general that RDF soldiers carried special military IDs, he told the commander, "congratulations, you have killed two Rwandan civilians." (Note: emboffs confirmed with RDF sources that soldiers turn in their civilian ID cards when they join the force, and are issued military IDs).

¶3. (C) Hinkel suggested that if RDF forces were routinely intervening in the Kivus, their presence would ultimately be known by the mistakes the RDF would likely make: the RDF was not infallible, and not every operation went according to plan in any military organization. Troops would be captured, left behind, left for dead; in some manner the RDF would be exposed. The absence of any such concrete failure was one more indication, said Hinkel, that no Rwandan forces had intervened in the Kivus for some time. Noting the propensity for Congolese of all stripes to automatically assume that any Kinyarwanda speaker in uniform was a Rwandan soldier, troops of rebel Tutsi general Laurent Nkunda were routinely labelled "Rwandan," he said, feeding the wide-spread belief among local populations that RDF troops were present in eastern Congo.

¶4. (C) As a side note, Hinkel said that FDLR contacts had told him that Islamic militants (unidentified) from outside

the region had recently offered to equip the FDLR if they would make common cause with them. The FDLR officers told Hinkel that they had rejected the offer.

15. (C) Comment. Hinkel offers the experience of just one observer in eastern Congo, but one whose job is to track the presence of negative forces, and be intimately aware of just who is in contact with whom among the many armed groups present in the Kivus. His observations strikes us as well worth noting, particularly when the next round of rumors begins. End comment.

ARIETTI